

Introduction

Anthropology and Its Crises

Jean-Paul Baldacchino and Jon P. Mitchell

‘May you live in interesting times’ was reputedly an ancient Chinese curse made famous by British MP Sir Austen Chamberlain in 1930. The premise is that ‘interesting times’ are times of upheaval, conflict and insecurity – troubled times. This ‘curse’ was chosen as the theme for the 58th Venice Biennale, in 2019. The theme was chosen to orient artists towards the ‘precarious aspects of existence today’, including threats to key traditions in the postwar order. The curator Ralph Rugoff (2019) writes how it sounds ‘uncannily familiar today as the news cycle spins from crisis to crisis’. Anthropology is no stranger to this sense of ‘crisis’. Since its early days the discipline has always been marked by a certain sense of ‘crisis’. The birth of anthropology in the early twentieth century was driven in no small part by the urgent need to document and collect records of a disappearing way of life in what became known as ‘salvage ethnography’. In America the need for such salvage was perhaps most severely felt, and indeed was institutionally sanctioned by the state’s Bureau of Ethnology. The sense of irrevocable loss of data was particularly poignant as a result of the post-Civil War migration (Gruber 1970: 1296). E.B. Tyler, Franz Boas, Alfred Kroeber and others of his generation were seeking to document the Native American way of life before it was irrevocably lost. Within British anthropology Malinowski was himself ‘suggesting that authentic Trobriand Island culture (saved in his texts) was not long for this earth’ (Clifford 1988: 73). While influenced by paradigms of natural history it is important to note that this anthropology, driven by a sense of ‘imminent destruction’, ultimately

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introduced a sense of ‘profound humanism’ to the discipline (Gruber 1970). Anthropology, however, continued to be marked by this sense of urgent salvage well into the postwar era. Lévi-Strauss’ encounters in the tropics were ultimately *tristes* because he could also see a disappearing world, a sense of crisis and despair that continued to haunt him until his death in 2009 (Baldacchino 2009). The sense of crisis in anthropology was therefore conditioned both by the prevailing theoretical model and the actual political climate from which it emerged. Other cultures were constructed as inhabiting an ‘Other’ time, one which is both timeless (Fabian 2014) and slow to change – or ‘cold’, as Lévi-Strauss puts it. Change was something that happened to an indigenous society when it encountered the forces of capitalism and colonialism. Writing in the *UNESCO Courier* in 1961 Lévi-Strauss invoked a dual crisis in anthropology – on the one hand there are ‘peoples who are simply vanishing from the face of the earth’ and there are others who are ‘categorically hostile to anthropology for psychological and ethical reasons’. To address the first crisis the answer for Lévi-Strauss was not too dissimilar from that of Boas and colleagues: ‘Research must be speeded up and we must take advantage of the few years that remain to gather all the information we can on these vanishing islands of humanity’, whereas to address the second crisis Lévi-Strauss proposed opening our doors to the Other to come and study ‘us’. In the 1960s, motivated by Lévi-Strauss’ speech at the bicentennial celebration of the birth of James Smithson, the Smithsonian embarked on a research programme of ‘urgent anthropology’ driven by this sense of crisis to document disappearing cultures or those undergoing rapid change (Link 2016). Even in the 1980s, as Clifford noted, anthropology continued to be characterized by a certain sense of *après moi le déluge* with the exotic culture in question inevitably undergoing ‘fatal’ changes’ (Clifford 1988: 73). This anthropological ‘salvage slot’ also linked with the ‘savage slot’ identified by Trouillot (1991), in which ‘otherness’ or ‘savagery’ requires redemption, rejection or preservation. Since anthropology’s reflexive turn (See Mitchell; Baldacchino this volume) the discipline developed its critique of naïve objectivism and the literary conventions that serve to deny the coevalness of the Other. The notion of a ‘salvage ethnography’ became untenable not only because anthropologists started to distance themselves from classificatory paradigms derived from natural science but because the fact that the very knowability of our subjects was put into question:

The confidence that self-closing discourse gave to Lévi-Strauss and Akobo Realism to Evans-Pritchard seems to many anthropologists less and less available. Not only are they confronted by societies half modern, half traditional;

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by fieldwork conditions of staggering ethical complexity; by a host of wildly contrasting approaches to description and analysis; and by subjects who can and do speak for themselves. They are also harassed by grave inner uncertainties, amounting almost to a sort of epistemological hypochondria, concerning how one can know that anything one says about other forms of life is as a matter of fact so. (Geertz 1988: 71)

The remedy proposed was to conceive of anthropology as a collaboration with the people it studies. Collaboration was presented as a way to render the people we study coeval. Collaborative ethnography, as discussed by Fabian, was seen as a resolution to the epistemic crisis that ‘anticipated much of what post-*Writing culture* anthropological revisionism sought and continues to seek’ (Johnson and Michaelsen 2008: 193).

These remedies for a new anthropology are not merely methodological or epistemological. They are increasingly cast as moral or ethical imperatives – as ethnographic subjects are increasingly cast as moral subjects, whilst incursions into their lives by ethnographers are scrutinized for their potential or actual immorality/amorality. Such scrutiny is evident not only in the growth and significance of ethical review within ethnographic practice (Sleeboom-Faulkner and McMurray 2018) but also, more substantively, in a moral recasting of the very project of anthropology itself. Recent calls to decolonize knowledge – including anthropological knowledge – generate an obligation to rethink the moral underpinnings of the discipline, including its links to the colonial and postcolonial past and present (Allen and Jobson 2016; Asad 1973), but also to reconsider the nature and implications of that past and present.

Colonial history is intimately intertwined with the history of the development of international capitalism. We write this Introduction at the time of the COP26 conference in Glasgow – the latest of the UN’s ‘Conferences of the Parties’ to address the global climate crisis. Among other things, this has led to debate – in parts of the UK media at least – about the capacity of capitalism to generate good in the world. Some argue that capitalism has been the only successful route to the alleviation of poverty; so much so that integration into capitalist markets – through the promotion of credit unions, artisanal entrepreneurship and other entry-points into the market – is seen as a blueprint for international development (Clammer 2017; Elyachar 2005). This faith in the market, though, has been challenged by re-emerging forms of social welfare in some parts of the ‘global South’ (Ferguson 2015) as well as scepticism about the capacity of ‘the market’ to solve the crisis of climate change – or indeed other crises. Despite the UK Prime Minister, Boris Johnson’s claims that ‘the market’ provided the vaccine solution to the

Covid-19 pandemic, it was the part publicly funded Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, distributed not-for-profit, that was at the centre of this solution.

Capitalism, especially in its late formation – of what Douglas Holmes (2010) has called ‘fast-capitalism’ – has the capacity to generate huge inequality, concentrating wealth in the hands of an increasingly small number of multi-billionaires whilst generating new forms of mass poverty. Capitalism is also a cyclical process – generating periods of prosperity and apparent stability, but also periods of crisis that are not only political and economic but also moral. Since at least E.P. Thompson’s (1971) elaboration of the concept of ‘moral economy’, scholars have emphasized the embeddedness of capitalism in morality (see also Hart and Hann 2011; Narotsky and Besnier 2014). Simoni (2016) suggests that it is in moments of crisis that we find the clearest evidence of this embeddedness (456), not only raising questions about the rationality or indifference of ‘the market’ but also highlighting the moral draw of potential alternatives to capitalism. Simoni examines the experiences and narratives of Cuban migrants to Spain, who abandoned the communist regime during the Spanish construction boom of the mid-2000s, attracted by the possibilities for living a better and more affluent life. Initially work was plentiful and earnings were high – but so was the cost of living, and when the financial crisis hit in 2007–8 unemployment and an inadequate social-welfare regime meant that any money accumulated quickly disappeared. By the time of Simoni’s fieldwork, in 2012–15 in Barcelona, the migrants were poor, disillusioned and critical of an economic system that failed to deliver on its promises of a good life. One stated that were he a young man in Cuba now, and knew how life was in Spain, he would just stay there, whilst another added, ‘with a measure of irony, “Cuba is the best country in the world to be poor!”’ (Simoni 2016: 461). Having experienced poverty under communism, and now thrown into poverty by capitalism, the moral value of the former – its ability to deliver a good life even in the toughest conditions – is seen as increasingly attractive. Narotsky and Besnier (2014) argue that in times of economic crisis we need to reconfigure our understanding of ‘the economy’, to focus not only on forms of exchange, labour relations or transactions but also on moral spheres of value and hope, in which people’s economic activities are as much rooted in ideas of what it means to live a good or successful life as in more clearly material considerations.

The experience of economic and moral crisis has been mobilized in various sectors of societies across the globe. The crises that drove Rugoff’s curatorial vision for the 2019 Biennale have been felt by anthropologists themselves. In 2021 five anthropologists put forward a *Collaborative Manifesto for Political Anthropology in an Age of Crises* (Vine et. al 2021),

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which featured in the American Anthropology Association's 'news' portal. As framed by the editors:

In the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic, anxieties abound about the future of humanity in the face of a diverse and interlocking set of issues that range from the climate crisis and migration to the rise of polarization and "post-truth" politics, and the increasing socioeconomic inequalities left by decades of neoliberalism. What is the role of political anthropology in this context?

The five anthropologists featured in the piece responded to the question with brief interventions. On the whole, however, there was a broad consensus to recognize the urgency of this moment, step up to the mark and stop navel-gazing. They call on the discipline to adapt methods and mindsets, and to reframe research questions, methodologies and forms for knowledge dissemination in ways that genuinely serve the world. This includes confronting the radical challenge of unveiling and undoing the destructive machinations of global capitalism ... all these shifts require us to work collaboratively with other scholars and with social movements, sometimes even with powerful institutions, while maintaining a critical stance (Vine et al. 2021).

In his contribution Schuller conveys the urgency of the task in no uncertain terms: 'humanity is at the precipice of self-inflicted apocalypse' (Vine et. al 2021). In his *Humanity's Last Stand* (2021) Schuller calls for an anthropology built on radical empathy, in which it is no longer enough merely to 'collaborate' (*pace* Fabian) with the people we study but indeed we need to start acting as 'accomplices' in working towards a more inclusive vision of humanity. Motivated by this sense of urgency many scholars have found renewed scope in taking up the call by Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1995) to work *for* the people we study rather than simply working *with* them. Contributors to this volume do not necessarily converge in their own response to these crises, but through their own work they reflect upon diverse aspects of this world in crisis and the way such 'crises' are experienced by the people we study.

The crises of the world are not disconnected from the crises in the discipline – and indeed they have, as can be seen in Schuller's work, led to some radical revisioning of the ethics and praxis of anthropology. As Baldacchino notes in this volume the epistemological crises in anthropology need to be read against the broader socio-economic and political contexts that emerge in the historic moment. Anthropology is itself not immune to these crises and does not exist outside them. Academia and academic research do not somehow exist in a privileged external sphere immune to the social realities of capitalism. As exploitative academic

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labour practices begin to characterize the neoliberal university (See Doyle and McMurray this volume) the profession of anthropology is increasingly called to task.

In 2017 the pioneering top-ranking journal *Hau* came under the spotlight. *Hau* started as an open-access journal in 2011 published by the ‘Society for Ethnographic Theory’ with a bold call for a renaissance in ethnographic theory. Anthropology, they argued, was suffering from a sort of intellectual amnesia. Anthropologists seemed to have forgotten the innovations and insights drawn from ethnography itself. No longer were anthropologists drawing upon the knowledge in the field to innovate and develop theory that in the past had led to innovations beyond its disciplinary borders: ‘Nowadays the situation is reversed. Anthropologists take their concepts not from ethnography but largely from European philosophy – our terms are deterritorialization or governmentality – and no one outside anthropology really cares what we have to say about them’ (Da Col and Graeber 2011: x). When founded *Hau* was committed to an open-access publishing model in defiance of the increasing commercialization of academic publishing and the growth of capitalist models in professional teaching and research. It was founded with the intention not only to bring innovation to ethnographic theory but also to ‘making anthropology itself relevant again far beyond its own borders’, as its founding editors Giovanni da Col and David Graeber (2011: i) stated in the Foreword to the inaugural issue.

In 2017, however, emboldened by the #MeToo movement a number of former and current graduate students and staff working for the journal wrote an open letter denouncing a work environment characterized by abuse of power, fraud, wage-theft, bullying, sexism and even ‘borderline sexual harassment’ (Former *Hau* Staff 7, 2017). This was soon followed by another letter also naming former editor Giovanni da Col as the supposed source of all the trouble. In 2018 former ‘editor-at-large’, and one of the founders, the late David Graeber, issued a public apology for not having realized the ‘signs’ while also expressing his concern that ‘HAU’s failure as an experiment in free scholarship, and its sale to University of Chicago Press, will be held out as proof that such projects aren’t viable’ (Graeber 2018). Some within the journal argued that this was all a witch-hunt that resulted from a personal feud between da Col and Graeber. Jesse Singal covered the controversy in a piece for *The Chronicle*, in which he makes the important point that ‘[t]he controversy, at root, wasn’t just about the journal or its editor, but also the ways in which contemporary anthropology is a morally corrupt, harmful institution in which the powerful prey upon the weak’ (Singal 2020). The issue grew to such proportions that there were also panels on the subject at the AAA

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(American Anthropological Association) conference. One of the former *Hau* employees 'Dowdy', interviewed by Singal and present at the event, expressed his dissatisfaction at how the whole affair had unfolded within anthropological circles: 'Students and scholars are using this opportunity to air their own grievances, or, in the case of the senior faculty, what can only be called a gross attempt at building their titles as activist-anthropologists, in securing that forum' (Singal 2020). This is not the place to discuss the substance of the specific case and its merits. Suffice it to note that anthropology as a profession does not have a privileged position outside the world it inhabits. And the crises that it observes and notes in the world also form part of its own history. It remains to be seen whether, after migrating to the University of Chicago Press and the editorial board being recomposed, *Hau* will manage to retain its leading place in the ubiquitous 'citation indexes' and 'journal rankings' that have come to stand for the weight of scholarship. That being said the spirit behind the foundation of *Hau* was also, as noted earlier, engendered by a dissatisfaction with the impoverishment of anthropological theory and a sense of crises from within.

While the natural sciences are no stranger to epistemic crises these are often the result of paradigmatic revolutions, in which crises lead to reconfigurations of epistemic orders (See Kuhn 1996). Anthropology on the other hand seems to have always existed in a state of indeterminacy; there has never been the same sort of epistemic surety as a result of its 'crises'. We would dispute the notion that anthropology has had a 'golden age' when its endogamous pioneering insights led the way. In many ways anthropologists were always significantly unsure about their position within the intellectual world and indeed their own future. Writing in 1926 Robert Redfield posed the question of whether anthropology can be considered a 'natural science'. His answer was ominous:

Anthropology, therefore, although in large measure a historical science, ever and again tends to become a natural science. To what extent its contribution to a nomothetic science of human behavior will remain independent, or will become merged with other disciplines having this method and interest, remains uncertain. It is probable that for some time its important contribution will remain the collection of a wide variety of invaluable data. (Redfield 1926: 721)

More than thirty years later the relationship between anthropology and history, as opposed to natural science, was still being debated. Evans-Pritchard was convinced that anthropology is closer to history than it is to social science, and indeed considered the two as '*indissociable*' (Evans-Pritchard 1962: 65). Writing in 1990 D'Andrade, responding to

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Scheper-Hughes' call for an activist anthropology, insisted that anthropology is above all else a science: 'This is not an argument that anthropologists should have no politics; it is an argument that they should keep their politics separate from the way they do their science' (D'Andrade 1995: 400). As we can see from the preceding *Hau* 'scandal', however, it is delusional to think that one can easily separate the two – after all the conditions of knowledge production are an essential part of anthropology's politics.

The 'epistemological hypochondria' that Geertz was referring to in the 1980s was neither new nor behind us. The specific epistemological crisis might have changed over the years (I think few still consider the thorny question to be whether anthropology is a form of history or a natural science), however anthropology has never been able to find a sure disciplinary footing beyond its call for participant observation – which is even now being claimed by other disciplines. In many ways, however, anthropology has grown and flourished in the interstitial space between disciplines. Perhaps this interstitial quality reflects its own practice wherein anthropologists exist in between cultures, becoming part of a culture and yet always remaining outside it.

Innovation in anthropology has tended to emerge from encounters with other disciplines – to cite but one example the effect that linguistics has had on the development of Lévi-Strauss' structural anthropology is well known. Partly fuelled by the crises of the representability of otherness anthropologists started to look towards literary studies, with the role of anthropologist as author gaining the foreground and inspiration being drawn from what Geertz called '*faction*' (Geertz 1988) or from creative non-fiction (Narayan 2007). As the object of our enquiry started to fade from our grasp, whether with the death of 'culture' or indeed the very 'otherness' of the other as they become more and more enmeshed within our horizons (Johnson and Michaelsen 2008), anthropologists kept searching for themselves through their encounter with other disciplines. With the recent rise of an 'ontological turn' in anthropology even theology has found a place within the discipline. Robbins, a critic of the state of 'suffering slot' anthropology (see Baldacchino this volume), famously called for an engagement with theological construals of otherness. As anthropologists:

we have more and more resigned ourselves simply to serving as witnesses to the horror of the world, the pathos of our work uncut by the provision of real ontological alternatives. The tropics as we portray them, wherever they happen to be, have never been so *triste* and devoid of ontological otherness as they are now. And the fact that we currently have to get our models of

critical otherness back from theologians like Milbank should indicate to us something about what we have lost. (Robbins 2006: 292–93)

However, even this turn to theology is itself a result of our reaction to a perception of a world in crisis – the sense of ‘horror’ in the world. This leads to a rethinking of what it is that anthropology does – epistemological questions are profoundly moral questions that, in this case, frame what it means to be an anthropologist. Anthropology has therefore moved from a discipline grown from a sense of crisis in the world (the loss of ‘traditional society’) to a discipline itself in crisis. The chapters in this volume represent divergent perspectives but converge in their commitment to the need for anthropologists to engage with this notion of crisis and develop our own positions relative to the crises we encounter in the field.

Anthropologists, however, are also keenly attuned to the ways in which crises are situated within and create their own temporalities (see Knight 2021). The question of ‘when’ is a crisis is just as important as, if not more important than, ‘what’ is a crisis. The language of ‘crisis’ can be used to create the discursive conditions required for the normalization of structural inequality. ‘Crisis talk’ can thus become a counter-revolutionary idiom in a time when ‘[c]risis talk today seeks to stabilize an institution, practice, or reality rather than interrogate the historical conditions of possibility for [its] endangerment to occur’ (Masco 2017: 73). It is certainly true that, as Masco observed in the US, ‘the configuration of the future as an unravelling slide into greater and greater degrees of structural chaos across finance, war and the environment prevails in our mass media’ (Masco 2017: 65). With the rise of right-wing nationalism from Brasilia to Rome (see Gledhill this volume), the growing numbers of displaced populations across the globe, alarming environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity, global warming, the spread of religious violence and intolerance and the overall rise in the politics of fear and hate it is hard to escape a sense of urgency and crisis in our everyday lives. Indeed, just as this volume was being brought together in 2019 the world went through yet another global crisis – which in turn prompted a new round of ‘urgent anthropology’ – the Covid-19 pandemic, and as we write this chapter, we read the letter of resignation tendered by Cardinal Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising, to Pope Francis over the loss of confidence in the Roman Catholic Church in the way of its ‘sexual abuse crisis’. While one can debate whether or not these crises are indeed ‘unparalleled’ or ‘unprecedented’ (We doubt it – as anthropologists, after all, drawing parallels and comparisons is our stock trade), it would be a mistake to dismiss the proliferation of crisis talk as

purely ideological. Contributors to this volume look to the various ways in which we, as anthropologists, can respond to and understand these various crises encountered in the field and in academia itself. Taken collectively these crises can be considered not just as a challenge to our 'cultural traditions' and social formations but indeed a challenge to our very 'species-being'. The concept of 'species-being' (*Gattungswesen*) has been relatively undervalued. Ultimately it is Marx's conception of what it means to be human; as Czank notes, the concept refers to 'the essence of humanity, the subject of Marx's philosophy, and the basis for all things Marxist' (Czank 2012: 318). Moral orientations borrowed from forms of humanism can no longer be taken for granted.

The rise of the 'ethical turn' in anthropology could itself be read as a symptom of the way we live through these 'troubled times'. As Robbins (2013) argues, one of the consequences of the reflexive auto-critique of anthropology has been a shift from the savage to the 'suffering slot', in which anthropologists' attention focuses increasingly on the subaltern, the disenfranchised, the precarious or the otherwise suffering subject. This move has, he argues, blunted some of anthropology's critical edge, which in turn can be redeemed by focusing on the ethical grounding of our informants – their evaluation and pursuit of the good. This anthropology of ethics and morality also requires us to re-evaluate the morality of the anthropological project itself.

The sense of crisis in the world needs to be read through our own anthropological task. A critical anthropology therefore requires us to look at the ways in which morality and the 'ethical turn' itself is discursively constructed and implicated in broader enquiries into the transformations of capitalist logic and its moral economy. Chapters in this volume include ethnographic studies on the 'refugee crisis' in the Mediterranean, the 'financial crisis' in Greece and the 'rule-of-law' crisis in Malta as well as the crisis of violence and hunger in South America that have resulted from capitalist development in the region. Other chapters look at the way in which crises in anthropology can be read alongside the political and economic crises that emerge from the historical conditions of capitalism itself.

The book opens with John Gledhill's reflection on long-term ethnographic engagements with Latin America – Mexico, Brazil – and his mission to untangle the complexities of the region through an approach to global political economy. At the same time he emphasizes the need for non-Eurocentric accounts of global political economy, calling for anthropologists to be public intellectuals with a moral imperative to make a stand in public discourse by speaking truth to (global capitalist) power. Gledhill also emphasizes the institutional contexts of anthropological

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knowledge production. The global crisis is also a crisis of the world's universities, as they are increasingly themselves enmeshed in the processes of global capitalism.

There follow two chapters that examine the notion of crisis in different Mediterranean societies. Paul Sant Cassia examines the political and moral crisis surrounding the 2017 assassination of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia. He explores local accounts of who was to blame for the murder to examine both conspiracy theories about – and the actual experience of – conspiracy, corruption and links between government and organized crime (mafia). Whilst Sant Cassia uses the 'event' of Daphne's death to explore deeper patterns of the political-economic imaginary, Daniel Knight challenges the temporality – or eventedness – of crisis. He argues that the usual concept of crisis as temporary rupture, or unexpected 'event', in the otherwise smooth flow of history is difficult to apply to the endemic and enduring crisis in Greece following the global recession of 2009/10 onwards. Enduring austerity measures and chronic structural poverty have, he argues, made crisis a normalcy to which people have adjusted and accommodated – a state of being rather than an event of crisis. It is an instructive observation and one that might inform a more general understanding of our contemporary 'interesting times', in which disaster capitalism of the 'shock doctrine' variety (Klein 2007) seems to have morphed into a form of 'crisis capitalism' – itself characterized by the constant invocation, or even manufacture, of crisis as a justification for political, institutional and financial restructuring. This is true of national- or regional-scale crisis capitalism but also, again, of the contemporary university as can be seen in the chapter by McMurray and Doyle in this volume.

Jutta Lauth Bacas also explores Greek crisis – this time the refugee crisis as experienced on the Greek island of Lesbos. Here a designated migrant 'hotspot' detention camp has also become a context for crisis as a state of being. Bacas' chapter, though, also explores the event of the camp's destruction by fire in September 2020. She takes this event as a kind of morality tale that implicates actors at multiple scales of analysis – from the global and the regional, to the national and municipal, to the local. All are implicated in this crisis denouement.

Disciplinary crises are at the heart of Jean-Paul Baldacchino's chapter, which charts the history of anthropology's reflexive critique from the 1970s critique of the discipline's colonial complicity – a process still enduring in the current calls for decolonization. He links together the recent emergence of procedural ethics regimes – which for many seem to threaten the open-endedness of the ethnographic method, and with it the integrity of the discipline – and the anthropology of moralities.

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The latter seeks to nuance and qualify the apparent moral certainties of an anthropology that had shifted its focus from the ‘savage slot’ to the ‘suffering slot’.

James McMurray and Matthew Doyle focus on the institutional crisis in contemporary higher education, and the ethics of casualization within university departments. Based on a study of a UK university, their chapter demonstrates the ethical dilemmas of underpaid, under-acknowledged and marginalized, precarious teaching staff as they try simultaneously to campaign for their rights, eke out a living and discharge their duties in a way that fulfils their sense of their ethical duty to their students, their colleagues and the discipline.

Jon Mitchell explores the moral dilemmas of LGBTQ+ Maltese as they negotiate a pathway between sexuality and Catholicism, which informs not only a theological landscape of sin and guilt but also a social world of stigma and shame. Mitchell locates his analysis not so much within broader world crises but, on the one hand, in crises of conscience within LGBTQ+ Maltese – to some extent his chapter is a story of life-crisis and resolution; and, on the other hand, in crisis within the broader discipline of anthropology. These crises are at once political, institutional epistemological, representational and ethical – requiring a new reflexivity and an attentiveness to the question of who represents whom within anthropological writing.

The final chapter is a memoir–paean to the late Paul Clough, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Malta, to whom this book is dedicated. Clough’s presence is manifest throughout the volume, but it is David Napier’s articulation of a new theory of risk that addresses his contribution most squarely. It outlines Clough’s response to Napier’s own recasting of the nature of the immune system. In contrast to the standard Darwinian ‘survival of the fittest’ account of epidemiology, which figures the immune system as fundamentally defensive of the integrity of the body, Napier suggests that it actively seeks out viruses to expand its repertoire of immunity. It is ‘as much a *search engine of difference* as a *defence mechanism*’ (Napier this volume). Our bodies, then – or indeed our genes – are not so much selfish as gregarious, displaying a fundamental extroversion in our propensity to seek out and (literally) incorporate otherness.

Influenced by Lévinas, and his emphasis on the foundational rooting of human selfhood in the acknowledgement and incorporation of the deep humanity of the other, Clough saw in this new epidemiology a means of recasting an understanding of humanity – and with that, anthropology – that is both representationally and ethically ground-breaking. Perhaps

humans, like immune systems, he opined, are fundamentally motivated by a social or cultural extroversion that would see the incorporation of otherness as a strengthening rather than a weakening force. Clough was concerned particularly with how to rethink the place of refugees and other migrants, who had become a feature of Maltese society since its accession to the EU in 2004 and among whom he had begun to research. Although Clough published a provisional account of his thinking (2012), it remained to be fully developed when he was lost to us in July 2019.

One of the global crises identified by Gledhill at the start of the volume is the global rise of the political right. He suggests that anthropologists should embrace the difficult prospect of ethnography among this 'repugnant other' (Harding 1991) to understand the dynamics and motivations of integralist, nativist and supremacist politics. It is also incumbent on anthropologists to develop theoretical frameworks that challenge the logics of exclusion inherent in right-wing politics, and Clough's account of socio-cultural extroversion is a promising development in this direction.

Our role as anthropologists requires us to engage not only with research participants and fellow scholars but also with government agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders, as well as global actors in political and economic environments. This requires an anthropology that is 'scalable' to different levels of analysis and attentive to the twin imperatives of a moral and ethical anthropology, and morality and ethics in the wider world of which anthropology is a part.

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